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RHMCSUU/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
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RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0049
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY 0541
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0061
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEHSUN/USUN ROME IT
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0063
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 000220

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, EAP/EP, INR, OES/STC, OES/IHA, MED, AND OES/IHB (DFANTOZZI, CPATTERSON, CSHAPIRO)
STATE PASS TO USAID GH (GSTEELE, DCARROLL, ACLEMENTS)
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP (STERN)
HHS/OSSI/DSI PASS TO FIC/NIH (RGLASS), OGHA (JMONAHAN, MABDOO, SCUMMINGS, DMILLER), ASPR (MPERDUE, RROBINSON)
CDC FOR COGH (SBLOUNT), CCID (SREDD) AND DIV-FLU (NCOX, AMOEN)
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS
BANGKOK FOR USAID (MACARTHUR/AATHWIN), APHIS (HHOWARD/RTANAKA) AND CDC (MSIMMERMAN)
BEIJING FOR HHS HEALTH ATTACHE (EYUAN) AND CDC (JMC FARLAND)
PHNOM PENH FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR (PKITSUTANI)
ROME FOR FAO (JZINGESER)
VIENTIANE FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR (ACORWIN)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [KFLU](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: TWO FIRST HUMAN CASES OF INFLUENZA A/H5N1 IN VIETNAM IN
2010, SEVERAL ANIMAL OUTBREAKS NATIONWIDE

REF: 09 HANOI 1290

1. (U) Summary: Vietnam reported its first two Influenza A/H5N1 infections of 2010, one of them apparently fatal. Consistent with seasonal trends, Vietnam also has experienced several outbreaks in flocks of chickens and ducks throughout the country. End Summary.

First Human Infection of Influenza A/H5N1 in 2010

2. (U) Earlier this week, the local media reported the first 2010 human highly pathogenic avian influenza A/H5N1 infection, a three year-old girl from south central Khanh Hoa province. Contacts at the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology told the Embassy that onset of symptoms occurred on January 27 and that the girl was taken to the district hospital outpatient clinic the following day with a fever and cough. By February 3, the patient had fully recovered. Lab samples taken January 28 came back negative for 2009 H1N1 and seasonal influenza, but positive for H5N1. It is not yet clear why this child with mild disease was tested for influenza (as influenza testing is not routine and this hospital is not in the National Influenza Surveillance System), nor is the source of her infection clear. This was Vietnam's 113th human infection since 2003, of which 57 have been fatal. This is the 13th case in a child ages 0 to 5 in Vietnam. Notably, the patient is only the second out of the past 12 human infections since late 2008 to survive.

3. (SBU) To date, we have received somewhat inconsistent information regarding animal outbreaks in the vicinity of the victim's home. Initial reporting from the Regional Animal Health Office Number 4 (RAHO 4) within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), which covers six provinces along the south central coast, including Khanh Hoa, stated that the Khanh Hoa provincial Department of Animal Health (DAH) found abnormal deaths in a flock of 770 unvaccinated chickens in the neighboring commune and from a flock of 6,000 unvaccinated quail at a nearby farm. The report noted that Khanh Hoa provincial DAH took 15 samples from the two flocks with 10 positive results (note: it is unclear whether the positive results came from samples from the chickens, quail or both). Media reports also note the mysterious deaths of a number of ostriches at a farm approximately 30 miles north of the victim's village. According to NIHE, as part of the initial, local investigation, it was reported that the family kept 15 healthy chickens, but that the patient had no known animal exposure nor

contact with sick humans in the 7 day period prior to onset (Note: NIHE has not yet performed an independent investigation). However, in a call the Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City staff, a senior Khanh Hoa DAH official stated that the victim's family had stopped raising poultry prior to her infection, that the ostriches (with which there is no known link to this patient or patient's family) appeared to have died from other causes, and that the poultry in the area had been vaccinated.

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Second Human Infection and First Fatality

14. (SBU) Earlier today, medical staff at the Pasteur Institute in Ho Chi Minh City confirmed to ConGen Staff a second human infection and first fatality in 2010 (114 cases and 58 deaths since 2003). In this case, a 38 year old woman from An Thoi Trung commune, Cai Be District, Tien Giang Province, south of Ho Chi Minh City, was hospitalized at Sa Dec General Hospital, Dong Thap Province on February 21 and diagnosed with pneumonia and septicemia. According to the Ministry of Health, she had developed symptoms on February 13, but initially treated herself at home. On February 21, she was admitted to Sa Dec hospital in Dong Thap province with chest pain, difficulty breathing and exhaustion. Per MOH, the patient died on February 23. A throat swab sample taken on February 22 and tested on February 23, was positive for H5N1, as confirmed by the Pasteur Institute in Ho Chi Minh City. The victim reportedly had slaughtered ducks, which have not been tested. RAHO 6, which covers Ho Chi Minh City and the surrounding provinces, stated that it was coordinating with the Tien Giang provincial Department of Animal Health to conduct an investigation. At the moment, animal health officials have not confirmed any animal outbreaks in Tien Giang.

Nationwide Animal Outbreaks

15. (U) Consistent with general seasonal trends, poultry outbreaks have occurred in several provinces throughout the country, including Nam Dinh (north coast), Soc Trang (Mekong Delta), Ca Mau (far south), Ha Tinh (north central), Dien Bien (northwest highlands), Kon Tum (central highlands), Quang Tri (north central) and Nghe An (north central), in addition to the likely animal outbreaks mentioned above in south central Khanh Hoa. Higher outbreak numbers often are associated with increased poultry production in the weeks leading up to the Vietnamese lunar New Year (Tet). This year, outbreaks occurred primarily in small to medium sized flocks of chickens and ducks, most of which apparently were not vaccinated or had only received the first series of vaccinations. In several instances, multiple farms in one geographic area reported infections. As of February 26, the provinces of Khanh Hoa, Ca Mau, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Nam Dinh and Soc Trang had official reported animal outbreaks within the past 21 days.

16. (U) This cable was coordinated with Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City.
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